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U. S. - Dept. of State.

MEXICAN AFFAIRS.

11-2577

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

IN ANSWER TO

A resolution of the House of the 18th ultimo, transmitting report of the Secretary of State on that subject.

JANUARY 9, 1866.—Referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

To the House of Representatives:

In compliance with the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 18th ultimo, requesting information in regard to steps taken by the so-called Emperor of Mexico, or by any European power, to obtain from the United States a recognition of the so-called empire of Mexico, and what action has been taken in the premises by the government of the United States, I transmit a report from the Acting Secretary of State, and the papers by which it was accompanied.

ANDREW JOHNSON.

WASHINGTON, *January* 5, 1866.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, January 4, 1866.

The Acting Secretary of State, to whom has been referred the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 18th ultimo, requesting the President "to communicate to this house any correspondence or other information in possession of the executive department in regard to steps taken at any time by the so-called Emperor of Mexico, or by any European power, to obtain from the government of the United States a recognition of the so-called empire of Mexico, and also what action, if any, has been had in the premises by the government of the United States," has the honor to lay before the President the papers mentioned in the subjoined list, called for by the said resolution.

W. HUNTER,
Acting Secretary of State.

The PRESIDENT

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List of papers.

Señor Arroyo to Mr. Corwin, March 2, 1865.
Mr. Seward to Mr. Corwin, March 13, 1865.
Memorandum read to Mr. Corwin by Mr. Seward, March 13, 1865.
Memorandum by Mr. Seward, July 17, 1865.
Mr. Romero to Mr. Hunter, August 1, 1865, with two enclosures.
Mr. Seward to Mr. Romero, August 9, 1865.
Mr. Romero to Mr. Seward, August 12, 1865.
Mr. Seward to Mr. Romero, November 7, 1865.
Mr. Seward to Mr. Bigelow, November 6, 1865.
Mr. Bigelow to Mr. Seward, November 30, 1865.
Mr. Seward to Mr. Bigelow, December 16, 1865.
Mr. Montholon to Mr. Seward, November 29, 1865, with one enclosure.
Mr. Seward to Mr. Montholon, December 6, 1865.
Mr. Montholon to Mr. Seward, December 9, 1865.
Mr. Seward to Mr. Bigelow, December 12, 1865.

Señor Arroyo to Mr. Corwin.—(Confidential.)

[Translation.]

NEW YORK, *March 2*, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR: Under date of the 10th of January last his excellency Don José Ramírez, minister of state and of foreign affairs of the Mexican empire, authorizes me to address myself directly and confidentially to the honorable Mr. William Seward, Secretary of State, upon determinate points, which I will indicate to you when I may have the satisfaction of seeing you for the purpose.

The same Mr. Ramirez tells me the following: "You can see Mr. Corwin in my name and avail yourself of his influence, manifesting to him that I have regretted not to receive his reply to the letter which I addressed to him in August last." I therefore beg you to be pleased to aid me with your influence, in order to bring about and see whether the object of my commission can be obtained, not doubting that your kindness will cause you to assist me with your counsels and opinion.

I think that you will be of opinion that I should go to your city (Washington) to solicit, verbally, the two points to which my mission is concreted, and I will accordingly do so; but, before undertaking the journey, I would be pleased if you would do me the favor, if you have an opportunity, to indicate to Mr. Seward my expected journey, in order that, if he have no objection, that I should see him extra-officially, he should so indicate it.

You can at once, if you think proper, intimate to Mr. Seward that one of the points of my commission is to see whether the habilitation (recognition) of our consuls can be obtained because of the embarrassments which exist in consequence of their non-habilitation, (non-recognition;) and while in Mexico the exercise of their functions has been continued without embarrassment to the American consuls, and that the government, which was that of Don Benito Juarez, does not exist either de facto or de jure.

You will excuse me for writing to you in my own language, as I do not know the English with the requisite perfection.

I avail myself of this occasion to place myself at your disposition as your most obedient servant, &c., &c., &c.

LUIS DE ARROYO,
Box No. 4202.

Mr. THOMAS CORWIN, *Washington.*

NOTE.—The foregoing letter was submitted to the Secretary of State by Mr. Corwin in the early part of the month of March, 1865.

Mr. Seward to Mr. Corwin.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, March 13, 1865.

Mr. Seward presents his compliments to Mr. Corwin, and will thank him to call at this department as soon as he can conveniently do so.

Hon. THOMAS CORWIN, *&c., &c., &c. Washington, D. C.*

Memorandum.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, March 13, 1865.

Mr. Seward read to Mr. Corwin as follows:

It is a fixed habit of this government to hold no official intercourse with agents of parties in any country which stand in an attitude of revolution antagonistic to the sovereign authority in the same country with which the United States are on terms of friendly diplomatic intercourse.

It is equally a fixed habit of this government to hold no unofficial or private interviews with persons with whom it cannot hold official intercourse.

For these reasons the overture, submitted by Mr. Corwin to the Secretary of State, is declined.

Memorandum by Mr. Seward.

On the 17th day of July, 1865, the Marquis de Montholon called at the Department of State, and said that a special agent had arrived at Washington from Mexico, and that he was the bearer of a letter signed Maximilian, and addressed to the President of the United States, a copy of which the Marquis submitted to the Secretary of State, saying that the agent was instructed to deliver the letter if it should be agreeable to the government of the United States. He also said that the agent brought papers to make explanations and adopt proceedings in relation to certain transactions on the Rio Grande, upon which the United States government had made representations to the imperial government of France.

The Secretary replied, that inasmuch as the letter referred to was directly addressed to the President of the United States, the Secretary would reserve himself until he should have had a conversation with the President upon the subject.

On the 18th the Secretary of State delivered back the copy of the letter to the Marquis de Montholon, and said that the United States are in friendly communication now, as heretofore, with the republican government in Mexico, and, therefore, cannot depart from the course of proceeding it has heretofore pursued towards that country, and of course that the President declined to receive the letter, or to hold any intercourse with the agent who brought it.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

Mr. Romero to Mr. Hunter.

[Translation.]

MEXICAN LEGATION IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Washington, August 1, 1865.

MR. ACTING SECRETARY: I have the honor to enclose to you a copy of a note which the consul general of Mexico, residing in New York, addressed to me under date of yesterday, calling my attention to the annexed advertisement published in the World of the 29th of July last past, by Don Luis Arroyo, who calls himself the consul named for that city by the so-called Mexican empire.

I deem it proper to call to notice that Don Luis Arroyo, under the title of commercial agent, is about to exercise, as is advertised, all the functions to which he might be entitled if he were the true consul of Mexico, with the respective *exequatur* of the government of the United States. For this reason I beg you to have the goodness to communicate to me the views of the government of the United States upon two points, upon which I require to fix my ideas before adopting an opinion upon this matter. The first is, whether the government of the United States considers that the ex-Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian has the right to appoint in this country commercial agents who shall publicly exercise the functions of consul, or whether this right belongs solely to the governments whose existence is neither doubtful nor questionable.

According to my understanding, this government only sees in the republic of Mexico a war between it and France, without recognizing there Maximilian, not even as a government de facto.

The second point is, whether such commercial agents can exercise the functions of consuls, not only without a formal *exequatur*, but also without any other sort of permission or recognition from the government of the United States.

I must make known to you that up to this period the French consul in New York had been performing the functions which Don Luis Arroyo pretends now to exercise, which was perhaps more logical and manifested more consideration for the government of the United States, inasmuch as the French consul has an *exequatur* from this Government, and represents more genuinely the order of things established in Mexico by the army of Napoleon III. The change which is now made seems to be directed to manifest that the government of the United States tacitly recognizes as a government de facto the work of the French intervention in Mexico.

I avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate to you, sir, the assurances of my distinguished consideration.

M. ROMERO.

WILLIAM HUNTER, Esq., *&c.*, *&c.*, *&c.*

[Enclosure No. 1.—Translation.]

CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE MEXICAN REPUBLIC IN THE U. S.,
New York, July 31, 1865.

In the number of the World dated the 29th instant, a Mr. Arroyo, who calls himself the consul of the Mexican empire in the city of New York, has published an advertisement, of which I enclose you a copy, in which he gives notice to the merchants of this port who may send effects to Mexico, that all the certificates of invoices and manifests must be authorized by himself, and not by the undersigned.

As it is well known that the said Mr. Arroyo cannot exercise in this country consular functions, because he has not the *exequatur* of the government of the

United States, a requisite which I alone possess, I have the honor to bring this fact to the knowledge of your legation, that you may, if you deem it proper, obtain from the Cabinet of Washington a measure that will put an end to this abuse, through which the laws of this country are mocked, which provide that in order to be enabled to perform the duties of consul, the *exequatur* of the President is required.

I have the honor to protest to you on this occasion my most distinguished consideration.

Independence and liberty!

JUAN N. NAVARRO.

The Señor Minister Plenipotentiary
Of the Mexican Republic at Washington.

A true copy:

F. D. MACIN.

Washington, *August* 1, 1865.

[Enclosure No. 2.—From The World, of July 29, 1865.]

Trade with Mexico.—Decree of Maximilian with regard to invoices and manifests of merchandise forwarded to Mexican ports.

New York, *July* 28, 1865.

To the Editor of The World

Sir: Desiring that the commercial community may come to the knowledge of the adjoining decrees, I request your kindness to order its publication in the columns of your valuable journal, and oblige

Your most obedient servant,

LOUIS DE ARROYO,
No. 42 *Broadway.*

Department of the Treasury,
Mexico, January 24, 1865.

(Section 1.—Circular No. 35.)

Consuls and vice-consuls from the empire of Mexico having been already appointed and residing in foreign countries, it appertains to them to legalize the invoices and manifests of merchandise forwarded to our ports, and also all documents required by the laws to be legalized. The agents appointed by the administration of Don Benito Juarez will cease in their functions, as such administration came to an end since the 31st of May, 1863.

Therefore, I would direct you, by order of his Majesty the Emperor, to notify the commerce of that city that hereafter all such above-stated documents must be indispensably legalized by the agents of the empire. All invoices and manifests of vessels coming into the ports of said empire, certified by the former agents, whose appointments have not been renewed by the actual administration, shall be considered of no value, and shall not produce any legal effect or evidence whatever.

All which I communicate to you so as to have the same duly published, hoping that when you will acknowledge the receipt of this order you will inform me the day that the publication has been made, in order to advise it to the collectors of the custom-houses on the sea-ports.

M. DE CASTILLO,
Sub-Secretary of the Treasury.

Louis de Arroyo,
Consul, acting as Commercial Agent, New York.

Mr. Seward to Mr. Romero.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, August 9, 1865.

SIR: Your note of the 1st instant has been received, in which you ask the attention of this department to an advertisement published in The New York World, of the 29th ultimo, by Don Louis Arroyo, in which that person gives notice that shippers to Mexican ports must have their invoices and manifests attested by him, as consul of the Mexican empire, in the city of New York.

In reply, I have to state that this department is not aware of any law of the United States which forbids a person claiming to be a consul of a foreign power from making on his own responsibility a publication of the character to which you refer.

It cannot be necessary for me to repeat what has uniformly been said by this government in all its official correspondence, that no other than the republican government in Mexico has been recognized by the United States. You are aware, however, that the party in arms against that government is, and for some time past has been, in possession of some, at least, of the ports of Mexico. That possession carries with it, for the time being, a power to prescribe the terms upon which foreign commerce may be carried on with those ports. If, as is presumed to be the case, one of those conditions is, that the invoices and manifests of vessels from abroad, bound to those ports, must be certified by a commercial agent of the party in possession, residing in the port of the foreign country from which the vessel may proceed, it is not perceived what effective measures this government could properly take in the premises. Such a commercial agent can perform no consular act relating to the affairs of his countrymen in the United States. To prohibit him from attesting invoices and manifests, under the circumstances referred to, would be tantamount to an interdiction of trade between the United States and those Mexican ports which are not in possession of the republican government of that country. The consuls of the United States in Mexico, who have their exequaturs from that government only, themselves discharge duties as commercial agents in the ports which are not under the control of that government in all respects like those which the person Arroyo, in the same way and to the same extent, claims to do at New York in respect to said ports.

I avail myself of this occasion to offer to you, sir, renewed assurances of my high consideration.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

Señor Don MATIAS ROMERO, *&c., &c., &c., New York City.*

Mr. Romero to Mr. Seward.

Translation.]

MEXICAN LEGATION IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
New York, August 12, 1865.

Mr. SECRETARY: I have had the honor of receiving your note of the 9th instant, in reply to mine of the 1st, asking questions of the department about the proceedings of Louis Arroyo, who has opened an office in this city, as commercial agent of the pretended Mexican empire.

As your note contains no positive answer to my interrogation, although it clearly indicates the steps to be taken by the United States government in the affair, I have thought it my duty, considering the circumstances of the case, to

submit the question to the government of Mexico, and wait for instructions to direct me in regard to it.

I embrace this opportunity of renewing the assurances of my most distinguished consideration.

M. ROMERO.

Hon. WILLIAM H. SEWARD, *&c., &c., &c.*

Mr. Seward to Mr. Romero.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, November 7, 1865.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 12th of August, in reply to the one I addressed to you, on the 9th of the same month, when answering your previous note of August 1, 1865, remonstrating against the course pursued by Señor Louis Arroyo, who styles himself the commercial agent of the so-called empire of Mexico, and which correspondence, you are pleased to inform me, you have submitted to your government for its instructions respecting the position assumed by the United States in that connexion.

I avail myself of this occasion to repeat the assurances of my very distinguished consideration.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

Señor MATIAS ROMERO, *&c., &c., &c., Washington, D. C.*

Mr. Seward to Mr. Bigelow.

[Extract.]

No. 300.] DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, November 6, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR: * * * * * *

I will proceed to discuss the subject, and leave you to present the opinions of the President to such extent and in such manner as your own views of propriety shall suggest. The President feels himself bound to adhere to the opinion set forth in my despatch No. 259, which has, as we understand, been already read to Mr. Drouyn de l'Huys. The presence and operations of a French army in Mexico, and its maintenance of an authority there, resting upon force and not the free will of the people of Mexico, is a cause of serious concern to the United States. Nevertheless, the objection of the United States is still broader, and includes the authority itself which the French army is thus maintaining. That authority is in direct antagonism to the policy of this government and the principle upon which it is founded.

Every day's experience of its operations only adds some new confirmation of the justice of the views which this government expressed at the time the attempt to institute that authority first became known. The United States have hitherto practiced the utmost frankness on that subject.

They still regard the effort to establish permanently a foreign and imperial government in Mexico as disallowable and impracticable. For these reasons they could not now agree to compromise the position they have heretofore assumed. They are not prepared to recognize, or to pledge themselves hereafter to recognize, any political institutions in Mexico which are in opposition to the republican government with which we have so long and so constantly maintained relations of amity and friendship. I need hardly repeat my past assurances of our sincere desire to preserve our inherited relations of friendship with

France. This desire greatly increases our regret that no communications, formal or informal, which have been received from the government of that country seem to justify us in expecting that France is likely soon to be ready to remove, as far as may depend upon her, the cause of our deep concern for the harmony of the two nations.

The suggestion which you make of a willingness on the part of France to propose a revision of the commercial relations between the two countries is not regarded as having emanated from the government of the empire. However that may be, it is hardly necessary to say that we should not be dwelling so earnestly upon the branch of political relations if it had not been our conviction that those relations at the present moment supersede those of commerce in the consideration of the American people.

Believe me to be always faithfully yours,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

JOHN BIGELOW, Esq., &c., &c., &c.

Mr. Bigelow to Mr. Seward.

[Extract.]

No. 209.] LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Paris, November 30, 1865.

SIR: Upon reflection I concluded that I should be likely to leave more correct impressions, and perhaps exclude some erroneous ones from the mind o Monsieur Drouyn de l'Huys, by reading your despatch No. 300 to him, than by leaving him, after our interview on Thursday week, to imagine its contents. I accordingly called upon his excellency on Tuesday last, and after disposing of some other matters of less importance, told him frankly that I wished to read to him the despatch, to the contents of which I had referred at our last interview, to prevent his supposing it contained anything which I had thought proper or had been instructed to conceal from him.

* * * * * * * *

When I had finished he thanked me for reading the despatch, though he felt obliged to say that he derived neither pleasure nor satisfaction from its contents.

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I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN BIGELOW

Mr. Seward to Mr. Bigelow.

No. 332.] DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, December 16, 1865.

SIR: Your despatch of November 30, No. 209, was duly received, and it has been submitted to the President.

Your proceeding in reading my despatch, No. 300, to Mr. Drouyn de l'Huys is approved. The general tenor of the remarks made by you to the minister of foreign affairs on that occasion is likewise approved. It is not the executive department of this government alone which is interested and concerned in the question whether the present condition of things shall be continued in Mexico. The interest is a national one, and in every event Congress, which is now in session, is authorized by the Constitution and is entitled to direct by law the action of the United States in regard to that important subject.

It has been the President's purpose that France should be respectfully informed upon two points, namely:

First. That the United States earnestly desire to continue and to cultivate sincere friendship with France.

Second. That this policy would be brought into imminent jeopardy, unless France could deem it consistent with her interest and honor to desist from the prosecution of armed intervention in Mexico, to overthrow the domestic republican government existing there, and to establish upon its ruins the foreign monarchy which has been attempted to be inaugurated in the capital of that country.

In answer to an exposition of our views which was thus made, the suggestion was offered to you by Mr. Drouyn de l'Huys that the government of the United States might favor the express desire of the Emperor to withdraw from Mexico, by giving to him some formal assurance that in the event of his withdrawal this government would recognize the institution of Maximilian in Mexico as *de facto* a political power.

It was my desire, in framing the despatch No. 300, to express in behalf of the United States a decision that the recognition which the Emperor had thus suggested cannot be made, and to assign, by way of explanation, the grounds upon which that decision was based. I have carefully considered the arguments against that decision which were presented to you by Mr. Drouyn de l'Huys in the interview referred to, and I do not find in them any sufficient reasons for modifying the views which the United States have expressed.

It remains now only to make known to Mr. Drouyn de l'Huys my profound regret that he has thought it his duty to leave the subject, in his conversation with you, in a condition that does not authorize an expectation on our part that a satisfactory adjustment of the case can be effected on any basis that thus far has been discussed.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

JOHN BIGELOW, Esq., *&c.*, *&c.*, *&c.*

The Marquis de Montholon to Mr. Seward.

[Translation.]

WASHINGTON, *November* 29, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR: Conforming to the desire you expressed to me, I send you, herewith, a copy and translation of Mr. Drouyn de l'Huys's despatch, the contents of which I have had the honor to read to you.

With the highest regards, I remain, my dear sir, respectfully yours,

MONTHOLON

Hon. W. H. SEWARD, *Secretary of State*, *&c.*, *&c.*, *&c.*

Monsieur Drouyn de l'Huys to the Marquis de Montholon.—(Confidential.)

[Translation.]

MINISTRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGERES,
Paris, October 18, 1865.

MONSIEUR LE MARQUIS: I have taken several occasions since two months to advise you of the dispositions of the imperial government concerning the duration of the occupation of Mexico by the French troops. I told you, in my despatch of August 17, that we called with our most sincere wishes for the day when the last French soldier should leave the country, and that the cabinet of Washington could contribute to hasten that moment. On the 2d of

September I renewed to you the assurance of our strong desire to withdraw our auxiliary corps so soon as circumstances should allow it. At last, following the same ideas more fully, in a private letter of the 10th of the same month I added that it greatly depended upon the United States to facilitate the departure of our troops. If they would adopt toward the Mexican government an amicable attitude which would aid to the consolidation of order, and in which we could find motives of security for the interests which obliged us to carry arms beyond the Atlantic, we would be ready to adopt without delay the bases of an understanding on this subject with the cabinet of Washington; and I wish to make fully known to you now the views of the government of his Majesty.

What we ask of the United States is to be assured that their intention is not to impede the consolidation of the new order of things founded in Mexico; and the best guarantee we could receive of their intention would be the recognition of the Emperor Maximilian by the federal government.

The American Union should not, it seems to us, be kept back by the difference of institutions, for the United States have official intercourse with all the monarchies of Europe and of the New World. It is in conformity with their own principles of public law to regard the monarchy established in Mexico as being, at least, a government "*de facto*," without particular regard to its nature or its origin, which has been consecrated by the suffrage of the people of that country; and in thus acting the cabinet of Washington would only be inspired with the same feelings of sympathy which President Johnson expressed recently to the envoy of Brazil, as guiding the policy of the United States towards the younger states of the American continent.

Mexico, it is true, is still occupied at this moment by the French army, and we can readily see that this objection will arise. But the acknowledgment of the Emperor Maximilian by the United States would, in our opinion, have sufficient influence upon the state of the country to allow us to take in consideration their susceptibilities on this subject; and should the cabinet of Washington decide to open diplomatic relations with the court of Mexico, we would see no difficulty to enter in arrangement for the recall of our troops within a reasonable period of which we would—might consent to fix the termination.

In consequence of the vicinage and immense extent of the common frontier, the United States are, more than any other power, interested to see their trade with Mexico placed under the safeguard of stipulations in harmony with the mutual wants of both countries. We would most readily offer our good offices to facilitate the conclusion of a commercial treaty, thereby cementing the political "rapprochement," the bases of which I have just made known to you.

By order of the Emperor, I invite you to make known to Mr. Seward the dispositions of his Majesty's government.

You are authorized, if you think it proper, to read him the contents of this despatch.

I remain,

DROUYN DE L'HUYS.

The MARQUIS DE MONTHOLON, *&c., &c., &c.*

Mr. Seward to the Marquis de Montholon.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, December 6, 1865.

SIR: Having made known to the President the Emperor's views on Mexican affairs which you communicated to me on the 29th ultimo, I have now the honor to inform you of the disposition of this government in regard to the same subject.

It seems proper, however, for me to say, in the first place, that what I have to communicate has been already fully made known to Mr. Bigelow, with authority, in his discretion, to impart the same to Mr. Drouyn de l'Huys.

The effect of the Emperor's suggestions when they are reduced to a practical shape seems to be this: that France is willing to retire from Mexico as soon as she may, but that it would be inconvenient for her without first receiving from the United States an assurance of a friendly or tolerant disposition to the power which has assumed to itself an imperial form in the capital city of Mexico. The President is gratified with the assurance you have thus given of the Emperor's good disposition. I regret, however, to be obliged to say that the condition the Emperor suggests is one which seems quite impracticable.

It is true, indeed, that the presence of foreign armies in an adjacent country could not, under any circumstances, but cause uneasiness and anxiety on the part of this government. It creates for us expenses which are inconvenient, not to speak of dangers of collision. Nevertheless, I cannot but infer from the tenor of your communication, that the principal cause of the discontent prevailing in the United States in regard to Mexico is not fully apprehended by the Emperor's government. The chief cause is not that there is a foreign army in Mexico; much less does that discontent arise from the circumstances that that foreign army is a French one. We recognize the right of sovereign nations to carry on war with each other if they do not invade our right or menace our safety or just influence. The real cause of our national discontent is, that the French army which is now in Mexico is invading a domestic republican government there which was established by her people, and with whom the United States sympathize most profoundly, for the avowed purpose of suppressing it and establishing upon its ruins a foreign monarchical government, whose presence there, so long as it should endure, could not but be regarded by the people of the United States as injurious and menacing to their own chosen and endeared republican institutions.

I admit that the United States do not feel themselves called upon to make a war of propagandism throughout the world, or even on this continent, in the republican cause. We have sufficient faith in the eventual success of that cause on this continent, through the operation of existing material and moral causes, to induce us to acquiesce in the condition of things which we found existing here, while our own republic was receiving its shape and development. On the other hand we have constantly maintained, and still feel bound to maintain, that the people of every state on the American continent have a right to secure for themselves a republican government if they choose, and that interference by foreign states to prevent the enjoyment of such institutions deliberately established is wrongful, and in its effects antagonistical to the free and popular form of government existing in the United States. We should think it wrong as well as unwise, on the part of the United States, to attempt to subvert by force monarchical governments in Europe for the purpose of replacing them with republican institutions. It seems to us equally objectionable that European states should forcibly intervene in states situated on this continent to overthrow republican institutions, and replace them with monarchies or empires.

Having thus frankly stated our position, I leave the question for the consideration of France, sincerely hoping that that great nation may find it compatible with its best interests and its high honor to withdraw from its aggressive attitude in Mexico, within some convenient and reasonable time, and thus leave the people of that country to the free enjoyment of the system of republican government which they have established for themselves, and of their adherence to which they have given what seems to the United States to be decisive and conclusive, as well as very touching, proofs. I am, sir, the more inclined to hope for such a solution of the difficulty for the reason that when, at any time within the last four years, the question has been asked of any American statesman, or even of

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any American citizen, what country in Europe was the one which was least likely to experience an alienation of the friendship of the United States, the answer was promptly given, France. Friendship with France has always been deemed important and peculiarly agreeable by the American people. Every American citizen deems it no less important and desirable for the future than for the past.

The President will be pleased to be informed of the reception which the Emperor gives to the suggestions which I have now made.

Accept, sir, the renewed assurances of my very high consideration.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

Marquis de Montholon to Mr. Seward.

[Translation.]

LEGATION OF FRANCE TO THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, December 9, 1865.

SIR: I hasten to acknowledge the reception of your excellency's note of the 6th December, in answer to my communication of the 29th ultimo.

I will not fail to transmit, without delay, this important document to the government of the Emperor.

Accept the assurances of my high consideration.

MONTHOLON.

Hon. WILLIAM H. SEWARD, *&c., &c., &c.*,
Washington, D. C.

Mr. Seward to Mr. Bigelow.

No. 327.] DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, December 12, 1865.

SIR: I enclose for your information a translation of a communication of the *29th ultimo from the Marquis de Montholon, proposing, upon conditions, to withdraw from Mexico the French troops. A copy of my reply is also enclosed.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

JOHN BIGELOW, Esq., *&c., &c., &c.*

*See letter of 29th November, its enclosure, and reply of Secretary Seward, December 6, 1865.

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